

## SPECIAL 'GOIN' HOLLYWOOD' EDITION

# VARIETY

NEWSPAPER  
Second Class P.O. Entry

Supplement to Syracuse University Magazine

## CURTIS: MAX IN MINIS

### Role Credits!

**Syracuse**—We couldn't possibly get 'em all, but in these 8 pages find another 40-plus SU alumni getting billboards on the boulevard. In our research, we discovered a staggering network of Syracusans in the business—producers, directors, actors, editors, and more! We soon realized that all of them would not fit, and to those left on the cutting-room floor: regrets. Know that this healthy sampling represents you all: Syracusans 'gone Hollywood.'—*ed.*

### Frons Launches Soap Sensation

**Hollywood**—NBC is making history as the first network to launch a daytime drama focusing on blacks. "Generations," the newest NBC soap, will feature daytime television's first "core" black family.

The show, preeming March 26, is a contempo social drama centering on the relationships of two Chicago families, one black and one white, whose lives have been linked for many years.

Guiding "Generations" is **Brian Frons G'78**, NBC Entertainment's veepee of daytime programs. If his record is any indication, the show should be a hit.

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### "War" Series Is All-Time Screen Dream

By **RENEE LEVY**

**Hollywood**—The longest. The most demanding. The hardest. The most expensive. That's the story behind **Dan Curtis '50's** blockbuster miniseries "War and Remembrance," which aired the first 18 of its 30 hours in November on ABC-TV.

A sequel to Curtis's 1983 maxi-

series "Winds of War," based on Herman Wouk's epic World War II novels, "War and Remembrance" was shot in 757 locations in 10 countries, using more than 44,000 actors and extras and nearly 800 sets. The production—the longest in television history—cost an estimated \$105 million to make. The concluding 12 hours are expected

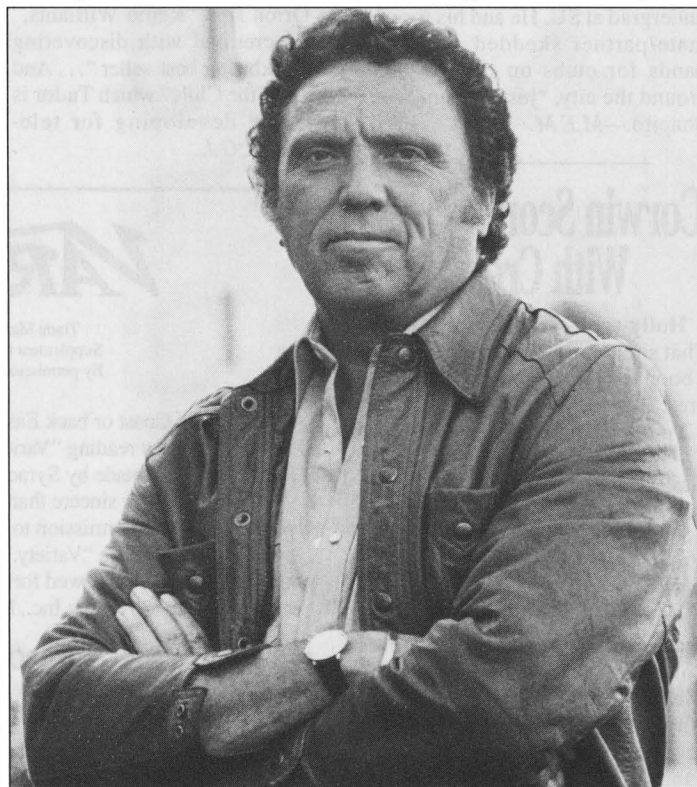
to air in late spring and the entire package will air in Europe next year.

Curtis, exec producer, director and co-scribe of the teleplay, spent two years filming and a year and a half editing "War and Remembrance," a project he originally considered undoable—particularly because of the naval battles and the depiction of the Holocaust.

Known to industry insiders for his incredible energy and tenacity, Curtis refused to give up. He spent nearly two years negotiating with the Polish government for the right to film at Auschwitz. For the first time ever, the death camp was opened to the crew of a dramatic film. Curtis's Auschwitz sequences are thought by many to be the most accurate portrayal of the Final Solution and certainly some of the most graphic footage seen on network television.

Telling the story of the war took nearly 10 years of Curtis's life, but

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Miniseries King Dan Curtis.

### Inside

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# Adler's Post Group Goes Gold In Music-Vid Postproduction

By MARY ELLEN MENGUCCI

**Los Angeles**—The Post Group, an L.A. postproduction firm that adds an array of finishing touches to some of Hollywood's finest audio and video work, is doing big business in music videos.

Per **Joan L. Adler G'76**, veepee of operations at Post, "Fifty to sixty percent, maybe even more, of the music videos shown on TV are done here."

Video editing, film-to-tape transfers, audio sweetening, 2-D and 3-D video graphics are among the special effects and services the



Joan L. Adler

organization provides.

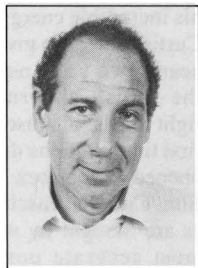
The Post Group's clientele, in addition to music-vid prods, includes an assortment of directors and producers representing everything from sitcoms to docu to news shows.

Adler, overseer of the facility's operations, says the 180-person firm "is basically the largest facility in the country in terms of equipment. We buy the latest and we are definitely the state-of-the-art. Whatever is new, you can come to the Post Group and find it here."

## 'Jugger' Prod. Team Based In Martin Shapiro Stable

**Los Angeles**—"Salute of the Jugger," a feature recently lensed in Australia and skedded for summer release, is the latest opus from writer / director David Peoples and producer Chuck Ro-

ven. Both are clients of **Martin Shapiro '57**, **Martin Shapiro**



partner in the L.A.-based Shapiro-Lichtman Talent Agency. Firm reps scribes, directors and producers.

Per Shapiro, who formed the agency in 1969, "I package and place people and their work, negotiating contracts, and advising on careers." Most of his time is spent on packaging, developing new talent or putting together deals for features and TV.

Firm's clients include writer/director W.D. Richter, helmers Joseph Sargent, Lee Phillips and Peter Hunt. Also screenwriters/novelists William Gibson, Harlan Ellison, and Jim Carabatsos.

Shapiro grew up in the industry and formed a small booking firm called the Marwin Agency as an undergrad at SU. He and his roommate/partner skedded acts and bands for clubs on campus and around the city, "just for fun," sez Shapiro.—*M.E.M.*

## Corwin Scores With Crossover

**Hollywood**—Is Elvis alive? That simmering question has been a boon for Tudor Communications prez **Stan Corwin '60**.

Tudor, a publishing and feature/TV development co., published Gail Brewer-Giorgio's "Is Elvis Alive?" last summer, just in time for the 11th anniversary of the King's death. Marketed with a supposedly "authenticated" tape of Presley speaking after his 1977 death, the book made the "New York Times" best-seller list. A telefilm is in the works.

Tudor, which buys or options screen rights to everything it publishes, specializes in literary works with potential wow power.

In the best scenario, a project would have several lives—as a hardcover, a paperback and then as a film or miniseries.

Corwin acquired Tudor with partner Gerry Sindell in 1987. He was formerly president and CEO of Pinnacle Books and was veepee of both Prentice-Hall and Grosset & Dunlap.

Corwin was exec producer of the Orion film "Remo Williams," and is credited with discovering the blockbuster best-seller "... And Ladies of the Club," which Tudor is currently developing for television.—*R.G.L.*

## Former Columbia Exec Casts His Line Elsewhere

**Los Angeles**—The former top-per of talent and casting at Columbia/Embassy Television, **Marc Hirschfeld '78**, has formed his own casting co. with partner Meg Liberman.

Two-year-old firm, Liberman Hirschfeld Casting, has cast plenty of series: "The Days and Nights of Molly Dodd," "The 'Slap' Maxwell Story" and "It's Garry Shandling's Show." Firm now serves as consultants to Fox Broadcasting for all pilots, works on NBC's mid-season replacement "The Live-In" and casts for Rob Reiner's co., Castle Rock Entertainment.

In his seven years with Columbia/Embassy TV, Liberman cast series "The Facts of Life," "The Jeffersons" and "One Day at a Time." He's responsible for the original casts of the current sitcoms "Married... With Children" and "227."

Of late, the 33-year-old exec won an Artios Award from the Casting Society of America for Outstanding Achievement in Daytime Casting, for his work on the CBS Schoolbreak Special, "Babies Having Babies," which was helmed by Martin Sheen.—*M.E.M.*

# VARIETY

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Whether on the Coast or back East, those in The Business stay on top of The Business by reading "Variety." So when we chose to highlight Hollywood news made by Syracusans, we decided how better than by "Variety"? Our sincere thanks go to "Variety" and publisher Syd Silverman for permission to fondly imitate the style and in-the-know-ness that are "Variety." The "Variety" logo and other graphic trademarks borrowed for this supplement are copyrighted by Variety Inc., New York, N.Y.

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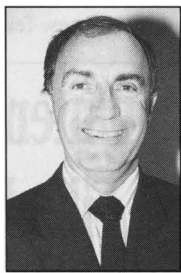
George Lowery

# 'BATMAN' LATEST MILLER COUP

## Fox Veep Coler Hypes New "Fly"

**Hollywood**—Joel Coler '53 just wrapped an international promo effort for "Fly II," sequel to popular insect sci-fier "The Fly."

It's one of many films that Coler—V.P. of advertising and publicity for Fox—has tub-thumped. While a small number of Fox films are exclusive to the domestic market, most are distributed worldwide. Fox has offices in 50 countries and Coler spends about one third of his time abroad pow-wowing with marketing reps and ad agency execs in various off-shore territories.



"Certainly, **Joel Coler** where we can, TV is the most important medium for getting our message out," sez Coler. "But there are a number of countries, including France and Scandinavia, where you can't advertise a film on TV. So we're also very involved in print advertising—magazines, newspapers and posting."

Coler, with Fox since 1964, has handled ad-pub for such blockbusters as the "Star Wars" trilogy, "The Sound of Music" and "Chariots of Fire."—*M.E.M.*

## Jackson Home, Light Books Elsewhere

**Los Angeles**—Superagent **Rob Light** '78 recently wrapped up Michael Jackson's multi-million-dollar, 13-month tour and is currently planning tour skeds for some of his other toppers.

Madonna, Bryan Adams, John

## Exec Lands Warner Pix

By **RENEE LEVY**

**Hollywood**—Warner Bros.' "Batman," preeming this summer, will add another notch to the belt of studio exec **Jim Miller** '63. For Miller, Warner's senior veep of worldwide business affairs, "Batman" was 10 years in the making, and that was before production even began.

Miller is Warner's chief deal-maker, responsible for the negotiations to acquire literary material and services of producers, directors, actors, writers and financing for the development of theatrical pix.

The "Batman" project began in 1979, when Warner acquired the rights to the strip from DC Comics. Four scripts were written during the ensuing decade, involving five different directors. A writer and director were finalized and Miller negotiated for the services of SU grad **Peter Guber** and Jon Peters to produce the pic. Miller pacted actors Jack Nicholson, Michael Keaton, and Kim Basinger and handled financing.

Cougar Mellencamp, Bruce Hornsby, the Bangles, Hall and Oates and the Kinks are among the musical performers he represents. Light, one of the top reps in the music biz, works for Creative Artists Agency in L.A.

Light books all of his clients' live appearances, which means dealing with promoters in local markets all across the country, routing tours, coordinating ducat sales, advertising and working with personal managers.

"The most exciting thing is to find a new band and help them go from being a club act to a headliner at a major arena," sez Light. He did just that with Bruce Hornsby and Bryan Adams.

Light, named Agent of the Year in 1986 by "Pollstar" magazine and again in 1988 by "Performance" magazine, is now prepping Jackson Browne's summer tour, working on a tour to promo Neil Diamond's new disc and slat-

ting a tour for Madonna's new album.—*M.E.M.*

That's de rigeur for Miller, who supervises a staff of 50. "We distribute about 20 to 25 films per year," sez Miller, "so you have to negotiate 25 directors, 50 or so actors, lots of books. We make those out of about 250 films in development. . . . There's a lot of negotiating that goes on all day long. There are 12 hour days—five of them—and there's work every weekend."

A lawyer by training, Miller got involved in showbiz as an attorney in a case against United Artists. He was later offered a job in the legal department of the studio, working there for five years before moving to Paramount, Columbia, and in 1979 to Warner. He was appointed to his current position in 1987.

The gratification, says Miller, is the finished product. "At the end of the day when you look at one of those 25 movies, you can proudly say, 'I had a part of putting that thing together,'" he sez. "It's like building a building. When it's done you can go over and kick it."

## Hamm Is Univ. Top Dog On 'Vice', Others

**Hollywood**—William Hamm '79, topper for current programming at Universal television, is the studio's point man for four series: NBC's "Miami Vice," CBS's "Almost Grown," "Coming of Age" and "Coach," a mid-season replacement.

Hamm oversees the creative content of shows produced at Universal and sold to the nets. That means taking a show from the idea stage through filming and editing. He works regularly with writers and producers, reading and reworking scripts and screening footage. He also acts as liaison to the nets. "It's the studio equivalent of a network programmer," sez Hamm.

Universal has nine skeins in production and six on the air. To keep up with the influx of new material, Hamm spends about half his day and plenty of weekends reading scripts. Between his own shows and those he reads on spec, Hamm estimates that he scans 600 scripts per annum.—*M.E.M.*

## Newhouse in Hollywood!

**Syracuse**—Twelve Newhouse students got a taste of their futures over Christmas vacation when they spent four days visiting the sets and studios of Hollywood's movers and shakers—all SU alums.

Showbiz luminaries such as **Fred Silverman** '58, **Marshall Gelfand** '50, **Henry Plitt** '39 and **Peter Hyams** '64 hosted the group and gave them a sense of life inside the entertainment industry. Their message: Don't get into this business unless you're absolutely certain you won't be happy doing anything else. It's hard, competition is fierce.

Highlights of the trip included a taping of "The Tonight Show"; a rehearsal of NBC's "227," directed by **Irma Kalish** '40; and a visit with producer **Peter Guber** '64.

The students were led by Newhouse Dean **Ed Stephens** and **Larry Martin**, exec director of program development. Per Martin, "The Hollywood trip is the highlight of a student's four years in the Newhouse School. Show business alumni open their doors to us year in and year out. We thank all the 'Hollywood alumni' who have shared trade secrets with us through the years."—*R.G.L.*

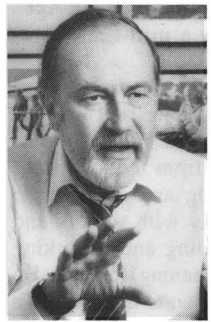


## Former DGA President Gil Cates Lensing Again

**Hollywood**—A year after stepping down from his post as prez of the Director's Guild of America, **Gilbert Cates '55** is back in the throes of his craft.

Cates directed two telefilms in '88: the Patty Duke/ Tom Conti starrer "Fatal Judgment" for CBS and the Beatrice Arthur vehicle "My First Love" for ABC.

On deck is Cates's first feature film since "Oh, God! Book II" in 1981, "Backfire," toplining Karen Allen and Keith Carradine. Pic is a thriller about Vietnam vet suffering from delayed stress syndrome.



Gilbert Cates

Distribberty: ITC Entertainment Group.

Well-respected in the biz, Cates

was twice president of the DGA, from 1983 to 1987. He successfully negotiated two industry-wide film and TV contracts, averting the Guild's first major strike. The 9,000-member org began construction on new headquarters in Hollywood and launched a campaign against colorization during his tenure.

Cates achieved his greatest renown in films and on Broadway, but he's done much TV as well. He's perhaps best known as producer/director of 1970's "I Never Sang For My Father," which he originally produced on B'way. Pic received three Oscar nominations.

Other credits include directing Broadway plays "Tricks of the Trade" and "Voices" and features "The Last Married Couple in America" and "Summer Wishes, Winter Dreams." He also directed "Hootenany"—the first musical series to be filmed on location—in the late '50's. He shot the pilot at SU's Sims Hall.—R.G.L.

## Helmer Hyams On To New Ventures

**Hollywood**—Wearing one hat has never been enough for **Peter Hyams '64**. The director often produces and writes his films. As the lone helmer in the cinematographer's union he often shoots his films himself as well.

Hyams first doubled as director/cinematographer on "2010," sequel to the classic "2001: A Space Odyssey," also serving as writer/director/producer. His most recent films as director/cinematographer: "Running Scared" and "The Presidio."

Hyams studied art and music at SU and began his career as a newsman at WCBS-TV in New York City. An anchorman at 21, he became the youngest such person in the country. He left in 1966 to cover the Vietnam War for CBS. There, he worked on a docu on

## Soap Sensation

*Continued from page 1.*

Frons was tapped for the CBS exec training program after earning his M.S. from Newhouse and was named director of daytime programs two years later.

Since taking over NBC's daytime programming in 1983, Frons has boosted ratings by introducing younger characters to the network's soaps, emphasizing love stories and shooting exotic remotes.

The network's last soap start-up, "Santa Barbara," which Frons initiated in 1984, won the 1988 Emmy for best daytime drama.

conditions in the battle zone. He landed in Hollywood four years later, selling his first script, "T.R. Baskin," to Paramount. He is at work on a new feature.—R.G.L.

## Indie Frank Dawson Intends Sixties Feature Film Project

**Hollywood**—1968 was a year of many things: turmoil, change, discovery, emotion. That year indie producer **Frank Dawson G'79** fled the projects to enter his freshman year in college. He intended to party and have a good time. What happened was something else entirely.

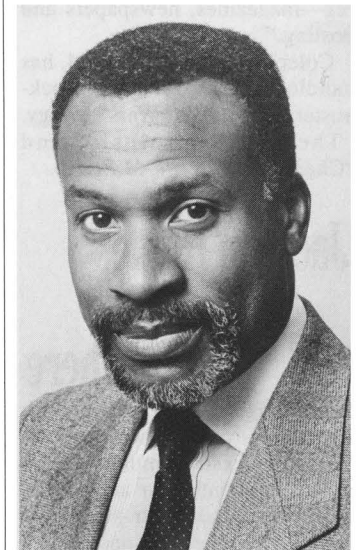
Events in 1968 are the basis of Dawson's first screenplay, tentatively titled "There Was A Time," penned for Universal. The screenplay is not Dawson's only project.

"In this business, the percentage of what you develop against what actually goes forward is so minuscule," sez Dawson, "the idea is to do as many things as you can, to throw as many things as you can up against the wall and see what sticks."

Dawson's production company, Regis Entertainment IV, has many noodles on the wall, so to speak: it pacted with CBS for a half-hour comedy show and soon begins photography on "Banana Bay," a feature.

A former Universal exec, Dawson started Regis in 1986. The

studio experience was tremendous in teaching him what the business is all about. Per Dawson, "I think my approach to every project I do is not just, 'Do I like it creatively and is it something I'm passionate about?' But 'Is it something the marketplace will accept? Will it sell?'"—R.G.L.



Frank Dawson

## ANIMATION REPORT

The production of an animated feature film is a long, exacting, time-consuming process, sometimes requiring three years of work. So when a film hailed by crix such as Disney's "Oliver and Company" comes along you can bet its animators spent thousands of hours on the project.

■ Award-winning animator **Ellen Woodbury '82** is one of many who painstakingly perfected "Oliver." She joined the feature animation division of Walt Disney Productions in 1985 after a one-year stint as a TV animator for Filmation.

Per Woodbury, who received an MFA from the California Institute of the Arts in 1984, "I like bringing the characters to life. I like getting ideas in my head and getting them to come out on screen."

In addition to "Oliver," Woodbury has worked on "The Great

Mouse Detective" and now she's animating a sequence of Disney's "The Little Mermaid," skedded for fall release.

■ **John O. Francis Jr. '84** is also working with animated productions as supervising associate producer at DIC Enterprises, an animation house in Burbank.

One of Francis's recent projects is ABC's animated Saturday morning kidvid show titled "Slimer and the Real Ghostbusters." The title may be strange, but the show's a hit with the small fry.

Francis, responsible for all stages of animation production for the firm's network, syndicated, and cable TV series, also supervised the production of "Madeline" for HBO, "Dennis the Menace," "Hello Kitty" and "Kidd Video" for CBS. The best part of his job? "Making children laugh," he sez.—M.E.M.

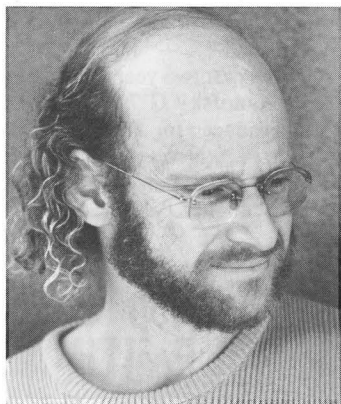
# POST-BUYOUT, ITC MAKES BIG PUSH

## Walter is H'wood's Top Script Prof

**Los Angeles**—“Screenwriting: The Art, Craft, and Business of Film and Television Writing,” a new tome by scripting guru **Richard Walter '66**, is fast becoming *the* leading source on the topic.

Published by New American Library, the 240-page manual offers would-be scribes practical advice about screenplay form and structure, stories, themes and the industry.

Walter, who penned “American Graffiti,” joined UCLA’s highly



**Richard Walter**

competitive screenwriting dept. more than 10 years ago. Now the chairman, Walter is a prime broker for Hollywood’s hottest new screenwriters. Walter says he receives five or six calls a day from agents looking for scripts by his talented pupils. “River’s Edge,” “Robocop” and “Stand and Deliver” are among the films written by his students.

He credits the success of his classes, students and book to the no-nonsense approach he takes to writing salable film and TV screenplays. He advises students to write good plots with satisfying endings and he’s not embarrassed to admit it. “We’re story hard-liners here.” Per Walter, theories of dramatic tension are important, but so are the nuts and bolts.—*M.E.M.*

## Leider Topper of Cinema Megabiz

By **RENEE LEVY**

**Hollywood**—Four months after company execs, led by prez **Jerry Leider '53**, sealed a management buyout of ITC Entertainment Group, business at the production and distribution co. appears to be solid.

Feature films “Backfire” and “State Park” will be unspooling soon. Dominick Dunne’s best-seller “People Like Us” will be a TV mini and “Secrets and Mysteries,” a TV series about ghosts, UFO’s and other oddities, is being shopped around to the nets for fall lineups.

Also skedded by ITC: “The Trial of Mata Hari,” a mini for the BBC; “The Life of Byron,” three one-hour

dramas for Greek television; and “Daughter of Silence,” a telefilm to be beamed Down Under.

ITC, owned by the Bell Group Ltd. until the November coup, has four divisions: ITC Productions, TV, cable, theatrical release and home video; ITC Entertainment, domestic distrib; ITC Entertainment Ltd., international distrib; and ITC Films, production headquarters in the U.K. Leider is topper of each unit.

Leider joined ITC Productions as prez in 1982. He previously owned his own production company and held top posts as both exec V.P. and president of Warner Bros. television and director of special programs at

CBS. He also directed legit on Broadway and the West End.

ITC’s greatest asset is its TV library, valued at nearly \$150 million. It contains such series as “The Saint,” “The Persuaders,” “Secret Agent,” plus films and minis. “A library is just films on a shelf,” Leider has said. “Our people are our most valuable asset.”

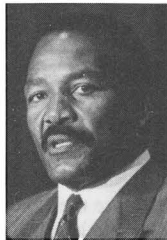
One of them is SU alum **Dennis Brown '66**. Brown is exec V.P. of production for ITC Productions. He is overseer of production and postprod. He’s supervised the minis “Poor Little Rich Girl: The Barbara Hutton Story” and “Billionaire Boys Club” as well as telefilms “A Time to Live” and “Unnatural Causes.”

## ‘Sucka’ Recent Brown Topliner

**Hollywood**—Actor and one-time football great **Jim Brown '57** stars in “I’m Gonna Get You Sucka,” a parody of ’70s blaxploitation pix. Comedy, written by Keenen Ivory Wayans, enables blacks to poke fun at black stereotypes.

Brown is showing up in other features too: “Street Dreams” and Arnold Schwarzenegger starrer “Running Man.” Brown began his acting career in such films as “Real Conchos” and “The Dirty Dozen” and helmed “Pacific Inferno.” He also produced Richard Pryor pic “Here and Now.”

Two years ago Brown became a principal in Ocean Productions. Film co. emphasizes black participation. Per Brown, firm is developing high-quality, low-budget pix by new black filmmakers.—*M.E.M.*



**Jim Brown**

## Clearfield Docu Hits Discovery

**Hollywood**—“Vacation Nicaragua,” producer/director **Anita Clearfield '75**’s award-winning 1986 docu, is finding new life in ’89 with its airing on cable’s Discovery Channel.

Film, revealing U.S./Nicaraguan conflict through eyes of “average” American tourists visiting Nicaragua, was named best docu at the San Antonio Cinefest, awarded a Silver Hugo at the Chicago Int’l Film Fest and a Bronze Star at Houston Film Fest.

Clearfield began her career at a CBS-owned TV station in San Francisco. After receiving a grant from the American Film Institute she moved to Los Angeles and joined Rock Solid Productions, where she produces industrial and promo films and docus.

She recently wrapped on a promo video for Medical Aid for El Salvador. Org sends medical assistance to civilians in El Salvador. Clearfield is also skedded to make a promo for Carecen, the Central American Refugee Center.—*R.G.L.*

## Curtis

Continued from page 1.

he was a veteran of the business long before the project began. An avid golfer, he began his producing career with his own creation, “CBS Golf Classic,” which was broadcast for 10 years and won an Emmy in 1965.

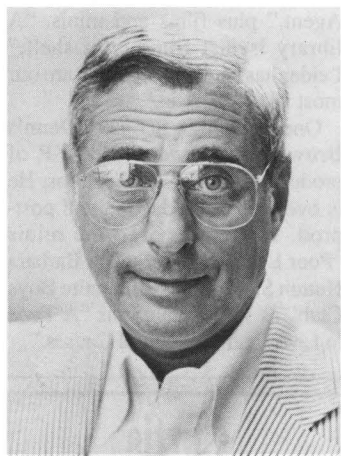
The following year, Curtis sold a pilot to ABC based on a dream he’d had about a girl taking a train to begin her job as a governess. He added a vampire and a few ghosts and created the spook opera “Dark Shadows,” a cult fave that ran five years on ABC. Two “Shadows” telepics and nearly a dozen others including “The Night Stalker,” “Dracula,” and “Trilogy of Terror,” and the feature “Burnt Offerings,” earned Curtis the reputation as “King of Horror.”

Actually, his credits include a mixed bag of titles, including “The Last Ride of the Dalton Gang,” “The Great Ice Rip-Off,” the semi-autobiographical “When Every Day Was The Fourth of July” and “The Long Days of Summer,” based on his reminiscences of his boyhood in Bridgeport, Connecticut.

## Silverman Returns With 'Matlock,' 'Mason,' Others

**Hollywood**—Fred Silverman '58 may have faced some hard times after being ousted as president of NBC in 1981, but he's back on top as producer with a slate of popular TV series.

"Matlock," "Jake & The Fatman," "In the Heat of the Night," "Father Dowling Mysteries" and



Fred Silverman

"Perry Mason" are all produced by The Fred Silverman Company (né Intermedia Entertainment Company). He's also developing syndie and cable telefilms.

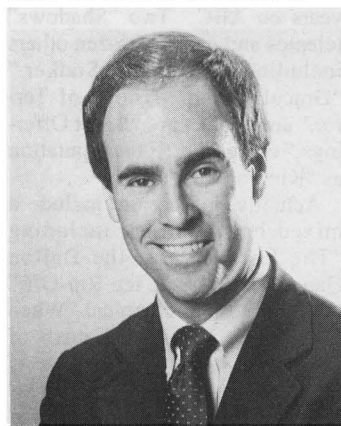
Known as the "king of television," Silverman holds the distinction of being the only individual to ever top programming of all three major nets. He was director of daytime programming at CBS at 33, later rising to V.P. of programming.

Silverman joined ABC in 1975 as prexy of entertainment. He was credited with leading the network from third to first place in prime-time ratings in less than two years. He became prez and CEO of NBC in 1978 and faced the losing battle of competing against hit shows he'd created at CBS and ABC.

"I now want to be highly selective in what I do," Silverman said in a 1984 interview. "I will produce only shows I believe in with great passion. Ultimately, I have only to satisfy myself."—R.G.L.

## Miller Hypes NBC Offerings

**Hollywood**—Of the nearly 60 minutes of commercial airtime in NBC's Super Bowl broadcast Jan. 22, eight minutes went to promoting the network's own fare. Per John Miller '72, NBC's ad-pub veep, that eight minutes would retail for close to \$10 million.



John Miller

He used the time to promote new NBC skeins "Father Dowling Mysteries" and "Nightingales"; the mini "Brotherhood of the Rose," which aired immediately following the game; and "Late Night with David Letterman," "Today" and soap operas.

Per Miller, the NBC promotion dept is the biggest network advertiser, using air time worth nearly half a billion dollars a year. Result: at least 7,000 promos per year, each overseen by Miller. "The American viewer is always looking for something new," sez Miller. "As a result, we keep our promotion new."

Miller joined NBC in 1982 as V.P., affiliate promotion services and was upped to his current post in 1984. He previously topped ad-pro at CBS News and was promotion manager at WBBM-TV in Chicago.—R.G.L.

## 'Newhart' Scribe Heads New CBS Sitcom

**Hollywood** — "Newhart" writer Norman Gunzenhauser '78 has ankled for CBS's

"Murphy Brown." He's producer of the new comedy, which preemmed last fall.

The sitcom stars Candice Bergen as an investigative TV reporter on a "20/20"-type show. Per Gunzenhauser, "Murphy Brown" is CBS's strongest comedy, ranked among the top 20 TV shows.—M.E.M.



Gunzenhauser

## 'Password' Latest Choderker Success

**Hollywood**—Speed and instantaneous decision-making are the essence of NBC quizzer "Super Password." It's what show's director George Choderker '66 likes best about it too.

"This game can be played on many levels," sez Choderker. "For instance, if the word the contestant has to guess is 'ghost,' you could offer the clue 'specter,' or the clue 'Caspar.'"

Choderker's directed "Super Password" since 1984 and helmed its predecessor, "Password," from 1979 to 1982. Ironically, his first industry job was as a page for the original "Password" on CBS.

Since then he's directed commercials, episodes of "Edge of Night" and "Love of Life" and quizfests "128,000 Question" and "Blockbusters." He also directed CBS coverage of the 1976 political confabs and the bicentennial celebrations, winning him Director's Guild of America awards.—R.G.L.

**SU alumni in Hollywood** are featured elsewhere in "Syracuse University Magazine." See "Short List," page 4; and big Clark and Guber write-ups, pages 10, 16.

## NBC's 'SB' Cruises With Kent At Helm

**Hollywood**—With the 1988 Emmy Award for best daytime drama on its mantel, super soap "Santa Barbara" is hotter than ever.

"SB" has been on NBC's slate about five years. In its infancy, the show's creators sought out veteran producer Stephen Kent '76, G'79 to oversee production. Kent was associate producer of CBS's "Capitol" during that show's start-up.

Now Kent monitors each aspect of "SB's" production: set design and construction, scripts, casting, props and wardrobe. "It all funnels towards me," he sez.

Kent has an undergraduate degree in TV and a master's in business and says this combo has been a big plus for him. "I was able to go from a finance department to the associate producer of 'Capitol,' because of my educational background."

For the past two years, Kent and Gary Kanofsky G'79, entertainment producer for KNBC-TV in L.A., have returned to SU to teach production seminars at the Newhouse School of Public Communications.—M.E.M.

## Bell Hits Top With Real-Life Screen Fare

**Hollywood**—New pilot for "Missing/Reward," about things and people missing and the rewards offered for their return, is latest from "real TV" honcho David Bell G'58.

Prez of Dave Bell Associates, Bell specializes in what he calls "reality-based" programming. He produced the "Missing . . . Have Seen This Person?" specials for NBC and originated net's "Unsolved Mysteries."

He produced award-winning telepic "Do You Remember Love?," on Alzheimers disease and is at work on "Long Walk Home," a feature about the genesis of the civil rights movement.—R.G.L.



# Chomsky's Strauss For Overseas

## Tinker's 'Tattingers' Latest Paltrow Quality Offering

**Hollywood**—Reservations are suggested Wednesday nights for "Tattingers," NBC's half-hour dramedy set in a Manhattan eatery. Show, once an hour long, was saved from NBC chopping-block by halving it's length.

"Tattingers," produced by MTM's Paltrow Group—creators of "St. Elsewhere" and "The White Shadow"—centers on a well-connected NYC restaurateur, his socialite ex-wife, their friends and associates. Exec producer **Mark Tinker '73** offers several explanations for the series' ratings woes.

"I think some viewers may have expected another 'St. Elsewhere' and were disappointed," sez Tinker. "The restaurant arena may not . . . have enough inherent drama in it to get people worked up about it. It's all sorts of little things. They may not be responding to the writing or the actors. They may not be responding to the thrust of the show, although I think we're making it better now than we did in the beginning."

Quality is the credo of the Paltrow Group. "St.E" won 11 Emmys, Tinker receiving the 1987-88 Emmy for outstanding direction, single episode.

Tinker joined MTM Enterprises as associate producer in 1975 for "Three for the Road," "The Bob Newhart Show" and "The Chopped Liver Brothers." He produced "Shadow," exec produced "St. E" and now exec produces "Tattingers."

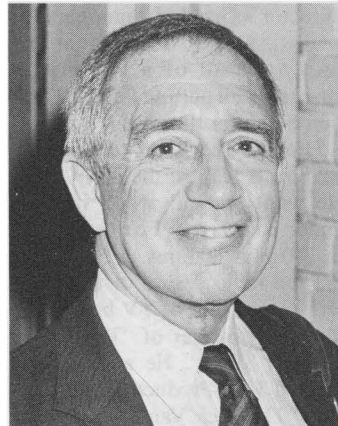
Tinker is prepping a half-hour comedy for the Paltrow Group. "It's a huge switch," he sez. Tinker is aiming for a sophisticated comedy à la "Cheers." "There's nothing wrong with slapstick," he sez, "but juvenile is not what we're interested in."—R.G.L.

## Project Pioneers European Market

**Hollywood**—The family of Johann Strauss is the subject of a 12-hour mini to be produced by **Marvin Chomsky '50** for a consortium of Euro nets. It's the largest project in size, scope and budget ever attempted on the Continent.

"The rest of the world is starting to catch up," sez producer/director Chomsky. "In all the years people have been talking about global networks, Americans have dominated the market. That's starting to change now. This is the first cloud on the horizon."

Chomsky is skedded to shoot



Marvin Chomsky

the mini in November on Vienna, Prague and Leningrad locations. He expects to wrap project up by Nov. '90. He says the mini will air worldwide.

Chomsky says project will be an amalgam of drama and music. "I expect it will be relatively historically accurate but it will not be a documentary," sez Chomsky.

Chomsky's last project was "Brotherhood of the Rose," an NBC two-parter. Other credits include: "Billionaire Boys Club," "Roots," "Holocaust," "Peter the Great" and "Attica." He's won three Emmys. —R.G.L.

## Kidfare Is Domain Of Sonski



Janice Sonski

**Hollywood**—Children spend more time in front of the television than anyone else, but they're not very selective. Developing intelligent kidvid is the challenge **Janice Weinstein Sonski '77** faces as topper of childrens' programs for NBC.

Sonski's mission: develop new and innovative moppet program-

ming. She finds ideas everywhere: books, games, fashions, fads and topics of general interest to tots.

"Unlike syndicated childrens' programs, which are often program-length commercials, we strive whenever possible to make learning so entertaining that children don't realize there is a lesson in their cartoons," sez Sonski. "We strive to create characters who are identifiable and through diversity of personality offer positive role models or examples of appropriate behavior."—R.G.L.

## INTRODUCING: THE SYRACUSE CHANNEL

What if you took all network programs connected to SU principals? You'd have the following dream line-up:

"Santa Barbara" (NBC); Stephen Kent, producer  
 "Murphy Brown" (CBS); Norman Gunzenhauser, producer  
 "Night Court" (NBC); Denny Dillon, actress  
 "It's Garry Shandling's Show" (FOX); Alan Rafkin, director  
 "Married . . . With Children" (FOX); Marc Hirschfeld, casting  
 "A Different World" (NBC); Darryl Bell, actor  
 "Tattingers" (NBC); Mark Tinker, producer  
 "Matlock" (NBC); Fred Silverman, producer—G.L.

## Locke's Syndie "Court" Taps Split Craze

**Hollywood**—Divorce is no laughing matter, unless it's someone else's, that is. Per **Peter Locke '76, G'77**, whose Kushner-Locke Company has had five seasons of syndie success with its "Divorce Court."

Other Kushner-Locke projects: HBO series "1st & Ten," Disney Channel's "Contraption," game show "Relatively Speaking," CBS telefilm "Liberace," and NBC telefilm "Sweet Bird of Youth."

Locke, co-chairman of Kushner-Locke, is a 20-year industry veteran. His producing credits include series "The Stockard Channing Show" and "Love at First Sight," features "The Hills Have Eyes" and "You Gotta Walk It Like You Talk It." He formed Kushner-Locke with Donald Kushner in 1983.—R.G.L.

**Henry Plitt '39** is pioneering Showscan, revolutionary new projection technology, with "Star Wars" F/X man Douglas Trumbull. For more see "Syracuse University Magazine," December 1988.

## Sheldon Leonard: Retired, But Still the Showman

**Beverly Hills**—Sheldon Leonard G'29 retired from the business, but he's still active in Hollywood.

Leonard, a self-described "retiree who is still ambulatory," says he's "in demand for practically all



Sheldon Leonard

the non-paying jobs associated with our industry."

His gratis toiling: he's a trustee and board member of the Motion Picture and TV Fund, the Motion Picture Home and Hospital, the

Director's Guild Pension and Health and Welfare Plan, the Permanent Charities Fund and he serves as secretary-treasurer of the Director's Guild of America. He's also winding up a three-year project as head of a committee charged with putting up a \$30-million home for the Guild.

Leonard (né Leonard Bershad) was on B'way in the early '30's. He went to Hollywood in 1940 under contract to Fox, appearing in 140-plus features. A regular on the top radio shows of the '40's, with the advent of TV he became director/producer of "The Danny Thomas Show." He and Thomas formed T&L Productions and created "The Dick Van Dyke Show," "The Andy Griffith Show," "I Spy" and "My World And Welcome To It," among others.

Leonard retains the rights to many of his TV properties and in his spare time manages their syndication. He says he also enjoys playing a round of 30-handicap golf now and then.—R.G.L.

## Falk Returns as P.I. Columbo

**Hollywood**—It's been 12 years, but finally "Columbo" is back. The cigar-chomping detective with the rumpled raincoat and beat-up Peugeot has returned to the small screen, this time on ABC.

Lt. Columbo, played by **Peter Falk G'53**, charmed TV viewers of the popular NBC series from 1972-77. No one is happier to see "Columbo" return than Falk himself.

"I wanted to do Columbo ever since it went off the air," Falk has said. "So it wasn't a decision to come back to do it. The problem was to work out some kind of formula which would be acceptable to the network, whatever network that was, the studio, myself and the producers."

As with the original series, "Columbo" alternates with other shows—this time under the ban-

ner "The ABC Monday Mystery Movie." Other shows in the rotation are Louis Gossett Jr. and Burt Reynolds starrers.

Falk has appeared in many feature films and recently returned to the stage in the Pulitzer Prize-winning drama "Glengarry Glen Ross" and in a revival of "Light Up the Sky."—R.G.L.

## Sammys in H'wood

What are the chances? One chapter of one fraternity places so many individuals in the Hollywood establishment!

Following is just a partial list of Syracuse Sigma Alpha Mus prominent in the Business:

**Seamon "Si" Jacobs '32.** TV writer, "Maude," "The Jeffersons," etc.

## CASTING CALL

Several former SU students can be seen on TV and movie screens these days. Tune in and you may see the following:

■ Since he landed a continuing role on NBC's "A Different World," **Darryl Bell '86** has become a recognizable face in Hollywood. A former economics major, he plays Ron Johnson in the sitcom. He got the part after a season as an extra on the show and an appearance in Spike Lee's "School Daze."

■ "Designing Women" and "Night Court" are among the programs where **Denny Dillon '73** has been seen lately. The former "Saturday Night Live" regular also had recurring roles on two Fox series, "Women in Prison" and "Dr. Science."

Dillon, nominated for a Tony award for her role as Mickey in the Broadway show "My One and Only," is writing comedy for herself and developing a TV pilot.

■ **George Wyner '69** has one of the most familiar mugs on TV, though few could tell you his name. Character-actor Wyner has guested on "The Odd Couple," "The Rockford Files," "Quincy," "MacMillan and Wife," "Rhoda," "Kojak" and many other series.

Probably best known for his six-year recurring role as Assis-

tant D.A. Irwin Bernstein on NBC's "Hill Street Blues," he's now co-starring (with Suzanne Summers) in the syndie "She's the Sheriff."

■ Comedy writer and actor **Jerry Cerwonka '80** has found himself in some strange situations of late. Over the last three years, he's been a top actor in TV commercials—singing "I'm a Little Teapot" for an

ice cream bar, catapulting out of cars to demonstrate the variety of ChemBank Ready Teller locations, etc. He's now in a Jerkey Treat commercial, attracting 75 dogs to his doorstep by blowing them a whiff of the dog snack with his living room fan.

Cerwonka, a former German professor at SU, is following the advice of many of his former students by performing as a stand-up comedian.

■ **Kim Myers '89** plays Samantha Hurley in the new ABC series "Studio 5B." A series about a series, "5B"—based

loosely on "Broadcast News"—offers a fast-paced glimpse into the workings of a network news-magazine.

Myers plays the show's hustling young production assistant.

Myers was an SU drama student in 1986 when she landed the female lead in the screamer "Nightmare on Elm Street II." On leave from Syracuse, she's been plying her trade since.

—Mary Ellen Mengucci



**Larry White '48.** TV exec and producer, "The Blue and the Grey," others.

**Dan Curtis '50.** Producer (see page 1).

**Marshall Gelfand '50.** Business manager, Diane Keaton, Debra Winger, others.

**Alan Rafkin '50.** Director, "The Mary Tyler Moore Show," "It's Garry Shandling's Show,"

among many others.

**Stan Corwin '60.** Producer, "... And Ladies of the Club."

**Bill Persky '53.** Producer/director, "The Dick Van Dyke Show," "Kate & Allie," others.

**Jim Miller '63.** Senior Veep, Warner Bros.

**Peter Hyams '64.** Director/writer, "2010," "Running Scared," "The Presidio."—G.L.